

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Cites Clerk For Selling Alcohol To Minors

Investigators also cite four minors for alcohol charges

DIAMOND BAR - Investigators of the California Department Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) cited one clerk and four minors during the course of a minor decoy operation in the cities of Walnut and Diamond Bar. The actions were the result of a compliance check operation on January 27, 2006 in which a minor under the direct supervision of the investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from retail licensees.

While conducting the operation, Investigators arrested a clerk for selling to two minors at a store in Diamond Bar. The minors were also cited for purchasing the alcohol. In Walnut, two minors were cited for possession of alcohol. One of the minors was also arrested and booked for possession of a dangerous weapon.

Those who sell to a minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will take administrative action against the business's liquor license. That may include a fine, a suspension of the liquor license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunk driving fatalities than the general adult population. Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. When the program first began, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below. The latest violation rate state-wide is approximately 16 percent.

In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that liquor licensees are complying with the law.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Sunne Wright McPeak, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.